

SCHEMATIC TABLE OF
JAPANESE OBLIGATIONS AND THEIR RECIPROCALLS

I. *On*: obligations passively incurred. One 'receives an *on*'; one 'wears an *on*,' i.e., *on* are obligations from the point of view of the passive recipient.

ko on. *On* received from the Emperor.

oya on. *On* received from parents.

nushi no on. *On* received from one's lord.

shi no on. *On* received from one's teacher.

on received in all contacts in the course of one's life.

NOTE: All these persons from whom one receives *on* become one's *on jin*, 'on man.'

II. Reciprocals of *on*. One 'pays' these debts, one 'returns these obligations' to the *on* man, i.e., these are obligations regarded from the point of view of active repayment.

A. *Gimu*. The fullest repayment of these obligations is still no more than partial and there is no time limit.

chu. Duty to the Emperor, the law, Japan.

ko. Duty to parents and ancestors (by implication, to descendants).

nimmu. Duty to one's work.

B. *Giri*. These debts are regarded as having to be repaid with mathematical equivalence to the favor received and there are time limits.

1. *Giri-to-the-world*.

Duties to liege lord.

Duties to affinal family.

Duties to non-related persons due to *on* received, e.g., on a gift of money, on a favor, on work contributed (as a 'work party').

Duties to persons not sufficiently closely related (aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces) due to *on* received not from them but from common ancestors.

2. *Giri-to-one's-name*. This is a Japanese version of *die Ehre*.

One's duty to 'clear' one's reputation of insult or imputation of failure, i.e., the duty of feuding or vendetta. (N.B. This evening of scores is not reckoned as aggression.)

One's duty to admit no (professional) failure or ignorance.

One's duty to fulfill the Japanese proprieties, e.g., observing all respect behavior, not living above one's station in life, curbing all displays of emotion on inappropriate occasions, etc.